

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY
REMARKS IN MEETINGS WITH CHINESE OFFICIALS AND SIGNING OF ACCORD ON
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U.S. to Help China Shift Arms Output to Civil Use

Perry Received as 'Old Friend' in Quest of Closer Military Ties; Human Rights Discussed

By Steven Mufson
Washington Post Foreign Service

BEIJING, Oct. 17—Just a few months ago, the Clinton administration considered limited import sanctions aimed at toys, pharmaceuticals, clothes and other goods made by Chinese military enterprises. Today, Defense Secretary William J. Perry signed an accord that provides U.S. assistance to help the Chinese military make even more civilian products.

The turnaround is part of a U.S.-Chinese rapprochement that Perry is leading in a four-day vis-

it to China. Perry, who has visited China nine times although never before as defense secretary, was warmly received and called "an old friend of China." He met today with Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, Defense Minister Chi Haotian, the vice chairman of the Central Military Commission, Liu Huaqing, and the minister of the Commission of Science, Technology and Industry, Ding Henggao.

Perry called the meetings "a good start" and Chi said, "Both sides have shown a positive attitude for the restoration and development of relations between the two armies."

U.S. officials said the talks dealt with six issues:

North Korea, the halt of long-range missile exports by China, nuclear nonproliferation, human rights, defense conversion and the need to make China's military less secretive. Both sides affirmed commitments to a nuclear-free Korean peninsula, the end of missile exports and nuclear nonproliferation.

In contrast to Chinese meetings with State Department officials earlier this year, Perry's talks did not include discussion of U.S. relations with Taiwan, which China regards as a renegade prov-

jamming of broadcasts of the Voice of America.

The two sides signed an accord to create a Joint Defense Conversion Commission, aimed at aiding Chinese efforts to turn military equipment makers into manufacturers of civilian goods.

U.S. officials said the commission would pursue projects providing the Chinese with technology for "environmentally safe vehicles" and for civilian air traffic control, a job now handled by the military.

Westinghouse and Raytheon Co. already are negotiating to provide air traffic equipment, sources in Beijing said. A U.S. official said contract awards were not imminent but he hoped the commission would later help tilt the Chinese government toward American contractors.

Military analysts have said the Chinese armed forces want air traffic equipment that would have military applications, but U.S. officials adamantly

asserted that any technology would be for civilian purposes and would have to go through the usual licensing procedures.

Perry also urged Chinese officials to make their military budget and planning more open in order to avoid misunderstandings. Military analysts say China's official military budget is a fraction of its true military spending, for example.

In what was probably a reference to Japan, Vietnam and Taiwan, a senior U.S. official said secrecy would only prompt China's neighbors to look at worst-case scenarios. "This is the way arms races get started," he said. "We discussed ways to increase openness as a way of preventing an action-reaction cycle that might lead to instability in East Asia."

Perry's visit has been aided by several earlier missions initiated almost a year ago when an assistant secretary of defense, Charles W. Freeman, came here to reopen military relations.

ince, U.S. officials said. They described discussions of human rights as amicable, taking up 15 to 20 minutes of Perry's two-hour meeting with the defense minister and three service commanders.

Perry reportedly stressed that military relations could not develop fully without improvements in overall U.S.-Chinese relations and that human rights was an important component of that.

While conceding that the discussion of human rights did not lead to any "common views," a senior U.S. official said the talks were "non-polemical" and at least "an additional channel" to address such issues. State Department human rights officials have been largely stymied in their efforts to engage the Chinese government on issues including prison conditions, detention of dissidents and